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THE INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE.
XIVTH SESSION, VIENNA, SEPTEMBER, 1913.

BY JOHN KOREN.

About 200 members and invited guests took part in the meeting which lasted five days. The following countries were officially represented, and for the greater part by their foremost statisticians: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Roumania, Russia, Servia, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The United States alone had the unenviable distinction of not being officially represented. Men from other countries find it difficult to comprehend why our government slights so important a scientific gathering and contrast its curious attitude with the enormous expenditures we incur for statistical work of all kinds. Of course the manifest lack of official interest is put down to our discredit and is taken to mean that the profession of statistics is not accorded the recognition which even the smallest European countries give it. That there is abundant justification for this humiliating inference is all too patent. Self-evidently, while this condition remains there cannot be that intimate association and co-operation in scientific work which is fundamental to governments the world over. There is another important aspect of the situation. We talk a great deal about cultivating proper international relations, but neglect one of the most obvious means of achieving them—by official participation in international work of all kinds that touches the common welfare, whether it be strictly scientific or immediately practical.

This year an official recognition of the International Statistical Institute would have been particularly fitting as in conjunction with its meetings the Austrian Central Statistical Commission celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, an event which the government helped it to commemorate with becoming dignity not only through the publication of splendid memorial volumes and an elaborate exhibit of Austrian statistical work,

both official and private, of great interest, but by a hospitality as lavish as it was gracious. The Court, cabinet officers, the magistracy of Vienna, officials of high and low degree, and many private individuals helped to make the convention a memorable event.

The excellent work of organizing the affairs of the Institute was presided over and personally led by His Excellency, Dr. Meyer, formerly Austrian Minister of Finance and now president of the Central Statistical Commission, a change which spells anything but a descent in European eyes, but which could scarcely be imagined in the United States.

The Institute, which was opened by Archduke Ferdinand Salvator and presided over by the venerable Senator Bodio, did its main work in three sections: (1) on demography and method; (2) on statistics of economics; and (3) on social statistics. Under the strictly adhered-to rule of the Institute, reports and papers are submitted in advance in printed form. Unless an article is unusually brief, only a summary is communicated orally, thus affording opportunity for genuine discussion. Appended to this note is a list of the papers coming before the meeting.

Perhaps the most important function of the Institute is its effort to bring about international unity and co-operation in statistical work. To this end many special committees have been appointed from time to time and instructed to study different subjects and bring in recommendations. For a long while it has been discussed how far the most effective instrument for this purpose would be a permanent statistical bureau under the direction of the Institute. At last such a bureau is to be created. Its scope and organization are set forth in the following program submitted to the majority of a special committee charged with a study of the subject:

The Permanent Bureau of the International Statistical Institute has for its object:

1st. To collect, examine, and preserve in its library the statistical documents of different countries and International Offices. It will derive from them the data which can be used for international comparisons, especially everything relating to demography.

2d. To facilitate by its permanent activity the unification of methods, of questionnaires, processes of documentary examination, and manner of publication, in such a way that the results may be most effectively compared.

3d. To publish as soon as possible an International Annual, a periodical bulletin, and, if need be, other works in which, along with statistical tables, there will appear a bibliography, as well as reports relating to the progress and innovations effected in certain countries, and which it would be profitable to make known in detail to all countries.

The use of languages shall be in accordance with the articles of the constitution and the regular practice of the International Statistical Institute.

The permanent headquarters of the Bureau is at the office of the International Statistical Institute.

The Permanent Bureau is placed under the authority of the Institute represented by its Bureau. It is under the management of the General Secretary.

With the approval of the President, the General Secretary may appoint to aid him one or several head clerks and the staff necessary for the work of the Permanent Bureau.

The expense of the Permanent Bureau will be covered:

1st. By a subvention from the International Statistical Institute, the amount of which will be determined by the General Assembly.

2d. By subventions from the various countries. The government of the country in which the headquarters of the Institute are located, will take the steps necessary to obtain these subventions.

3d. By gifts and bequests.

4th. By the income from the sale of publications, etc.

The financial administration of the Permanent Bureau is completely separated from the financial administration of the International Statistical Institute. None of the sums at the disposal of the Permanent Bureau can be spent for any other object than that determined by Art. 1.

The annual reports on the administration of the Permanent Bureau and the annual financial statement will be presented at each session of the Institute by the General Secretary.

In the event of the liquidation of the Permanent Bureau the Board of Overseers, mentioned below, will decide upon the use to be made of the assets and will appoint liquidators.

A Board of Overseers, composed as follows, will control the financial administration of the Permanent Bureau. This Board shall be made up of:

One representative from each country furnishing a subvention of at least 5,000 francs. Every country whose annual subvention exceeds 10,000 francs will be entitled to two representatives.

Furthermore, every group of persons or every individual donor who contributes to the expenses of the Permanent Bureau may be allowed by the Institute to be represented on the Board.

The Board will arrange its own organization and will determine the order of procedure.

Among other committee reports submitted at the Vienna meeting may be mentioned one under the title "La statistique du chômage" of 185 pages, the joint work of a committee of the Institute and the International Association on Unemployment. The document, which was presented by Dr. George von Mayr and M. Louis Varlez, contains reports from different countries and formulates the following principles:

I. No adequate conception of the problem of unemployment can be obtained by means of one kind of statistics alone. At present three statistical sources which supplement each other seem to be necessary for the acquisition of a satisfactory knowledge of the subject. These are:

1. The general census of unemployment which should be facilitated and interpreted by means of local supplementary or independent inquiries;

2. The trade union statistics of unemployment;

3. Inquiries into the condition of persons employed in industrial undertakings instituted by employers or by the authorities.

II. The general compulsory census, or still better, occupational or industrial census, is the essential starting point for any attempt to obtain accurate and complete statistics of unemployment in industry and commerce.

III. Instead of asking whether the person concerned is unemployed, the question on the census paper should be "Did you work on (date)? For whom did you work?"

IV. Persons answering the first question in the negative might be required to give information on the following points on a supplementary form: Cause of unemployment (list of possible causes to be given on the form); exact date when the unemployment commenced; whether the person in question has any subsidiary occupations; whether he has registered himself at a labour exchange and if so at which exchange; whether he is receiving unemployment benefit from a trade union, a friendly society or from any other source (source from which benefit is obtained to be clearly stated); length of his residence in the locality.

V. The forms relating to the unemployed should be worked up with the forms filled in by the other workers and should contain all the general information usually required (age, sex, status, industry or profession, origin, residence, etc.)

VI. Before finally deciding upon the form of questions to be put to the unemployed, it would be advisable to hold *experimental* inquiries in different towns, which should be held as far as possible under exactly similar conditions as the General Census of unemployment. These experimental inquiries should be tested and arranged by an international commission of experts.

VI bis. Inquiries of this kind held at industrial centres either regularly or during crises would also be valuable.

VII. It is desirable that the general census should be supplemented by means of local and regional inquiries.

VII bis. Specially valuable information can be obtained from the Unemployment Insurance Office wherever such a system is in force.

VIII. The fluctuations of unemployment and the percentage of persons entirely without employment can best be ascertained from the trade union unemployment statistics which are collected by most Governments.

IX. It does not at present seem desirable to use the statistics of the number of days in respect of which unemployment benefit has been payable instead of those of the percentage

of unemployed members of trade unions. The former are, however, highly valuable and should be published.

X. Identical forms of questions should be adopted in all countries where inquiries of this kind are to be held and should be sufficiently detailed to allow of the grouping of the unemployed according to occupation and locality.

XI. For the purposes of international statistics it is recommended that instead of merely publishing the comparative figures as at present, the figures for the different industries should be compared separately and the result in the different classes of district kept separately.

XII. It is recommended that periodic inquiries should be held respecting persons employed in industrial establishments. This is the only way in which reliable data can be obtained as to occupations in which short time and casual jobs are customary.

XIII. All other sources of statistical information respecting unemployment and even respecting phenomena connected with it must be examined in the future as they have been in the past. The method of collecting this information should be improved in such a way as to yield the most fruitful results for purposes of international comparison. The labour Exchange statistics which give information as to the lack of work of unemployed persons up to the date of registration and those relating to the compulsory sickness and invalidity insurance might in the future be of great value in this connection. The statistics of migration within each country and of emigration and immigration might also be used with advantage to supplement the unemployment statistics."

A very important report was that on international financial statistics, prepared by Dr. Freiderich Zahn, director of the Royal Bavarian Statistical Office, of which special mention will be made in a subsequent number of this publication.

To Dr. Thirring, Director of the Statistical Bureau of Budapest, is owing that the project of an annual statistical year-book of the large cities of Europe seems about to be realized. The subject has long been under discussion in statistical circles. Finally, in 1907, the burgomaster of Budapest, being strongly convinced of the need of such a publication, induced

Dr. Thirring to take the initiative and bring the subject before the Institute. At the meetings in Copenhagen and Paris the matter was discussed, and at the Vienna session he presented part one of the proposed annual, printed as manuscript. It deals: (1) with meteorological conditions; (2) the condition of population (total population, age, population according to religious confession); (3) movement of population, (marriage and divorce, births, mortality, including causes of death and infant mortality, immigration and emigration). In all 15 European countries with a total of 145 cities, most of them of 100,000 population and over, are represented. It is suggested that the Institute encourage the plan and support it by active co-operation. Participation by the United States were highly desirable but it is unthinkable until we arrive at the dignity of having efficient statistical bureaus not only in each state but in each large city. Moreover, on the side of vital statistics, we are not in position to contribute the material needed.

Another report of special importance and prepared by a committee of the Institute, bearing the title "*Statistique des exploitations industrielles des états et des municipalités*," was presented by M. G. Schelle of Paris. A preliminary report had been submitted by him at the meeting at The Hague and he now follows it by one of 139 pages containing a variety of comparative statistics of great value. It is proposed that the committee continue its labors.

Of other committee reports which it is hoped may be considered in some detail in a later number of this quarterly should be mentioned one on "*Statistique des états de culture*," presented by M. Lucien March; and one on "*La répartition des revenus et fortunes privés*," presented by A. N. Kiaer, director of the Central Statistical Bureau of Norway.

Among the papers of an unofficial character deserving special attention was one by Dr. Friederich Zahn on "*Die Frau in Erwerbsleben der Hauptkulturstaaten*," a contribution to statistics of women in industry, with five statistical tables.

Of incisive critical nature was the article on the statistics of the causes of criminality by Dr. Hoegel, general prosecutor, who denies the possibility, at least for the present, of stating causes of criminality in statistical form.

Another paper dealing with crime matters was submitted by M. Koefod, chief of the Danish statistical bureau, and is entitled "Statistique des recidives de delinquants Danois."

The only paper by an American was a brief one by Prof. Irving Fisher under the title "What an International Conference on the High Cost of Living Could Do." Unfortunately, the author was not present to urge his plan for such a conference. He mentions as the "unsolved problems" which should be considered, the following:

- (1) What have been the facts during the last two decades or more as to the cost of living?
- (2) What have been the causes?
- (3) What have been the evils?
- (4) What is the outlook for the future?
- (5) What are the remedies?

Prof. Fisher, hinting at the possibility of the high cost of living being a monetary problem, discusses the remedy he has proposed in a standardized monetary unit, which is well known to American readers.

Two elaborate mathematical-statistical papers were placed before the Institute; one "Ueber die Zeitfolge Zufälliger Ereignisse," by Prof. Dr. L. von Bortkiewicz (Berlin); the other bearing the title "Zu den Anwendungen der Wahrscheinlichkeitsrechnung in der Mathematischen Statistik."

Among the new committees appointed was one to consider the statistics of the production and consumption of alcohol, the instigation of it coming from the International Committee for the Scientific Study of the Alcohol Question.

The next meeting of the Institute—two years hence—is to be held at Brussels.

List of Reports and Papers submitted to the International Statistical Institute, 1913;

- A. DE WENDRICH, Statistique internationale des transports.
- L. VARLEZ, Statistique internationale du chômage.
- A. N. KIAER, Répartition des Revenues privés.
- H. HOEGEL, Ursachen der Straffälligkeit.
- B. JOVANOVTCH, Über die landwirtschaftlichen Nutztiere im Königreiche Serbien, ihr Wert und ihre Verteilung an die einzelnen Besitzer.
- L. VON BORTKIEWICZ, Über die Zeitfolge zufälliger Ereignisse.

- L. MARCH, Statistique des Etats de culture.
- F. ZAHN, Die Frau im Erwerbsleben in den Hauptkulturstaaten.
- M. BELLON, Statistique internationale de l'assurance contre l'invalidité.
- G. SCHELLE, Statistique des exploitations industrielles d'Etat et des Municipalités.
- F. ZAHN, Statistiques des finances.
- H. FORCHER, Zu den Anwendungen der Wahrscheinlichkeitsrechnungen in der mathematischen Statistik.
- P. MEURIOT, Des migrations intérieures à Paris et à Londres à l'époque contemporaine.
- P. MEURIOT, De la valeur du terme de banlieue dans certaines métropoles Londres, Paris, Berlin.
- P. MEURIOT, De l'état actuel de la Statistique religieuse dans les Etats européens.
- L. MARCH, Commission de l'office international de Statistique, résumé des discussions au cours de la réunion qui s'est ouverte à Rome le 26 Avril 1913 sous la présidence de M. L. March, membre de la Commission.
- P. E. FAHLBECK, L'évaluation de la richesse nationale de la Suède.
- M. HUBER, Table de durée des mariages en France.
- E. NICOLAI, Fécondité des mariages.
- R. DUDFIELD, Registrement des naissances et décès.
- A. ANZIFEROFF, Quelques considérations sur la Statistique du mouvement coopératif.
- A. TSCHUPROW, Zur Frage des sinkenden Knabenüberschusses unter den Geborenen in Frankreich.
- M. KOEFOD, Statistique des récidives de délinquants Danois.
- W. SCHIFF, Erhebungen von Wirtschaftsrechnungen minderbemittelter Familien.
- L. MARCH, Statistique internationale du mouvement de la population.
- I. FISHER, What an international conference on the high cost of living could do.
- U. GIUSTI, Sur la mesure de la Densité des Agglomérations en urbaines en général et en Particulier des Agglomérations italiennes.
- A. JULIN, Statistique des Accidents du Travail en Belgique.
- G. THIRRING, Bericht über die Herausgabe des Statistischen Jahrbuches der Grosstädte.
- H. GODFREY, L'Organisation Statistique au Canada.
- Y. GUYOT, Les facteurs des prévisions économiques.
- R. VAN DER BORGH, Die Frage der Herbeiführung internationaler Vergleichbarkeit in der Wohnungsstatistik.
- G. MORTARA, Numeri indici delle condizioni economiche d'Italia.
- S. C. LOCH, Statistics of Public Poor Relief in some Capital Towns.
- FELLNER, Die Schätzung des Volksvermögens Österreichs und Ungarns.
- SORER, Indexzahlen zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung Österreichs.
- RAFFALOVICH, Statistique des primes et subventions.
- FUSTER, Statistiques concernant les Accidents du Travail.
- FOLDES, Statistiques des prix des grains.

NEYMARCK, Statistique internationale des valeurs mobilières.

SCHMID, Statistischer Hochschulenunterricht in den verschiedenen Kulturstaaten.

HJELT, Kurze Darstellung der Organisation der offiziellen Statistik in Finnland und der gegenwärtig hier in Ausführung begriffenen oder geplanten statistischen Arbeiten.

THOMPSON, Irish Statistics.

JULIN, Recensement de l'Industrie et du Commerce au Belgique au 31 Décembre 1910.

SILBERGLEIT, Internationale Wohnungsstatistik.

RICCI, Statistique internationale des superficies et des productions agricoles.

SIMIAND, Le mouvement général des prix à la fin du 15^e au 18^e siècle.